Act III. THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY.

Dr. Wilde pinxit

Mr. MIDDLETON as SALISBURY.

_____ Come on
Yes Salisbury, Salisbury calls thee to the Strife.

[illegible] Printed for J. Bell British Library, Strand, Feb. 9th 1793.


THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY.
SALISBURY.

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London Printed [illegible] Square [illegible] 1798.

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THE

COUNTESS OF SALISBURY.

A

TRAGEDY,

BY HALL HARTSON, ESQ.

ADAPTED FOR

THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRES-ROYAL,

DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

By Permission of the Managers.

The Lines distinguished by Inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation.

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of

JOHN BELL, British Library, STRAND,

Bookseller to His Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

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MADAM

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TO

ELIZABETH,

Countess of Moira.

MADAM,

THE attention you have vouchsafed to the Countess of Salisbury and the author, ever since they have had the honour of being known to your ladyship, persuades me that you will take pleasure in hearing it has been favourably received on the English theatre. Stript now of all stage decoration, and the assistance which it has hitherto received from the most animated performance, it is to undergo a stricter scrutiny, that of the closet; a scrutiny for which it is indeed but little provided. I know your ladyship will make a tender allowance for want of experience in the author, and such errors as are incident to human imperfection; but this is an indulgence, which I doubt the critic will not so readily show him. But however he may censure, I must ever think myself happy in having already acquired your ladyship's good opinion. I am also flattered, as often as I think of the near resemblance my heroine has of your ladyship. Had I been earlier honoured with your ladyship's acquaintance, I think I could have much

enlarged the character. And yet there are many virtues, many delicacies, which it would have been impossible for me to have preserved in the picture, of which those only can be truly sensible, who have the happiness of being acquainted with the original.

Please, madam, to accept the following attempt, as an offering of my gratitude for many favours; as imperfect indeed, but honest proof, of the esteem which is due from,

MADAM,

Your Ladyship's

Most respectful,

Most obliged,

Humble Servant,

H. HARTSON.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY made her appearance about two years ago in Ireland, where she was received with very singular marks of favour; the author there had many friends, and with all the partiality they might be supposed to have for him, those friends did not hesitate to declare, that the excellent performance of *Mrs. Dancer* and *Mr. Barry*, contributed largely to the success of the piece:—written in his early youth, without having much knowledge of the stage, or dramatic performances, the author is sensible what his tragedy must be, notwithstanding the smiles with which it has been indulged. England, agreeably to the character of good nature and generosity which it has established through all the world, has kindly followed the example of its sister nation, and received with indulgence the attempt of a young writer, who is indeed ambitious of pleasing, but dares not aspire to excellence. He attributes, in a great measure, his good fortune now, to what his friends attributed it before, the animated performance of *Mrs. Dancer* and *Mr. Barry*:—It is theirs to endeavour to support a reputation already gained; his to aim at improvement, in order to acquire one.

THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY.

THE author of this play is a gentleman, by name HALL HARTSON. An anecdote is told, the probability of which we are inclined to admit, that Dr. LELAND assisted in the composition. What induces us to think so, is the strange inequality of the composition. Some pages, not scenes, carry all that weighty exuberance of figurative diction that we catch from the study of Milton; elevation of thought, refined by platonism: others again retain the flattest puerilities of thought and expression.

Surely no understanding capable of producing much of this tragedy, would think it necessary to make the following rejoinder:

> But hear me, lady, hear a pious lesson,
> Which thy own lips to me have *oft* repeated;
> There is a power unseen, whose charge it is,
> With ever wakeful eye, to watch the good.

The sentences are frequently rendered uncouth, as well by distorted expression, as tumid affectation. Lady Salisbury, when demanded whether her lover should be made happy to-morrow, or the bright succeeding day, answers,——

> I know not; nor will I submit me or
> To promis'd league or tye.

The catastrophe of the piece produces the pleasure, which results from triumphant virtue.

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. Weston, in the Character of a Teague.

My jewels, I'm come to spake in the behalf——
Hoot, devil burn you all, you makes me laugh;
Upon my soul now, I don't take it well in you;—
Arra, be easy, till I'm after telling you:

Smit with the love of glory and of pelf,
To-night a bard, from Dublin its own self,
Has brought a play here for your approbation;
A very pretty thing, by my salvation.——
If you'll trust Irish evidence, I mean.—
I cann't the story very well explain:
But its about a countess and an earl;
The countess is a mighty honest girl.
But there's a villian with a damn'd cramp'd name,
Makes such proposhals—'tis a burning shame——
Another too—a knight—bekeys as why——
But hould you now, you'll see it by and bye;
And then 'tis time enough to tell the plot.——
Oh, but that's true,—I'd like to have forgot
The dresses:—'Pon my conscience, in my days
I never saw their peer,—they're all a blaze.
Then there's a child, the sweetest little rogue!——
Only excuse a trifling spice of brogue;——

He'll make you cry your eyes out, I'll be bound——
'Tis Ireland is the true poetic ground.
The Muses—Phœbus—heath'nish cant I loath!
What's Mount Parnassus to the Hill of Howth?
Or all the scenes each foolish poet paints——
Oh, bub-bub boo! give me the isle of saints.—
Turn up your noses—cavil now and carp——
Musha, I'm sure our emblem is the harp.
But stop!---the bell rings.——Fait they'll soon begin;
'Tis time for me to be a going in.
I take my lave, then——but dear craters mind—
Pray, to our Irish poetry be kind:
'Tis a new manufacture in effect;
And yours, my souls, t' encourage and protect.
No critic custom then exacted be;
Pass it, like Irish linen, duty free.

Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

Men.

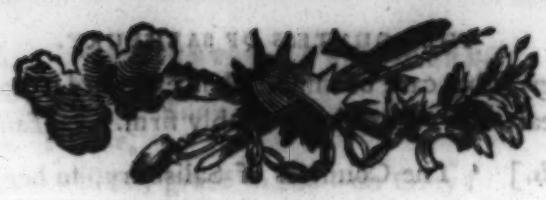
ALWIN,	Mr. Smith.
RAYMOND,	Mr. Palmer.
GREY,	Mr. Aickin.
MORTON,	Mr. Farren.
SIR ARDOLF,	Mr. Packer.
LEROCHES,	Mr. Chaplin.
LORD WILLIAM,	Miss Heard.

Women.

ELEANOR,	Miss Kemble.
LADY SALISBURY,	Mrs. Siddons.

Knights, Peasants, &c.

SCENE, *Salisbury Castle, and the Country about it.*



THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

An Avenue leading to a Gothic Castle. Enter GREY *and First* Knight.

Grey.

A MESENGER dispatch'd by Lady Salisbury!

Knt. And in the specious guise he wore, had pass'd
Unquestion'd; had not I in happy season
Approach'd, even as th' unwary centinels
Half op'd the gate. By threats o'eraw'd in part,
In part thro' hope of favour won, he own'd
At length, by whom employed, whither bent,
And for what purpose.

Grey. Say—

Knt. Strait to repair
To Marlborough; where now, as fame reports,
Our king resides, with all his peers; and there
To seek the Lord de Warren; to what end
This paper will, as I suppose, inform you—
I was about to bear it to Lord Raymond.

Grey. That care be mine. Henceforward it concern
Us near, our vigilance be doubly firm. [*Exit Kn*

[*Reads.*] 'The Countess of Salisbury, to her illu-
'trious friend, the Lord de Warren.

'I have lost my husband—Me and my lands Lo
'Raymond claims, as by royal grant assigned to him.
'He has banished my train, encompassed me wi
'his creatures, and holds me a prisoner in m
'own castle. If the memory of thy noble friend b
'dear to thee, haste and rescue the afflicted

'ELA.

How near was Raymond's hope, the beauteous hope
He tended with unceasing care, how near
My rising fortunes marr'd—I like not this:
Her, and her rich domains he would possess;
Yet in his breast there lives that kind of heart
Withholds him from the path that's nearest—He,
That would be great, must first be bold.
I hate those motley'd characters;
Something, I know not what, 'twixt good and ill,
Yet neither absolute; all good, all ill,
For me—That day, saith he, that happy day,
Which sees the countess mine, shall amply pay
Thy services: a doubtful balance this
Whereon my fortunes hang—This way he moves;
And, by his gait and gesture, ill at ease—
We must be firm;
My hopes demand it, and the time admits
No weak, no scrupulous delay—

Enter RAYMOND.

Ray. To sue,
But ever without grace to sue—oh Grey!
I am even weary of the vain pursuit.

Grey. It is, in truth, my lord, an irksome labour.

Ray. But now I cast me at the fair one's feet;
Pleaded my passion with whatever arts
Might best the gentle purpose aid; but she,
Instead of such return as I might hope,
Repaid me with an eye of cold contempt.
Of her late gallant lord she spoke; his merits
In opposition hateful placed to mine.
Urg'd then with recollection of her wrongs,
Like the loud torrent, with steep winter rains
O'ercharg'd, in all the loose, ungovern'd sway
Of wrath and indignation, she assail'd me.

Grey. And did my lord, in this unseemly fashion,
Hear all with equal temper? Wak'd he not
With such a peal—

Ray. Thou know'st not what it is
To love like me—Long time (for passion now
Had shed o'er all her charms a brighter glow,
That like Jove's daughter most she look'd, severe
In youthful beauty) long I lay, o'eraw'd
And silenc'd as by some superior being;
Till wak'd by pride, quick from the floor I sprung;
Warn'd her how she provok'd my power;
'Twas great, 'twas now within these walls supreme;
I long had gently woo'd her; but that love,
Tho' patient, would not always brook disdain.

Grey. 'Twas well: and what ensu'd?

Ray. Silence at first,
Then tears; bright drops, like May-morn dews the fall
From the sweet blossom'd thorn. Back in her chair
She sunk—Oh! had you seen her then, dissolv'd
In all the soft, the lovely languishment
Of woe; while at her knee, with countenance
Most piteous stood her beauteous boy, and look'd
As if each tear, which from his mother fell,
Would force a passage to his little heart——
I fled; else had I kneel'd, and wept myself
As well as she.

Grey. O shame to manhood!—suits
Such weakness with our hopes?

Ray. She must, she must;
Yes, Grey, she must be mine—and yet—yet fain
Would I persuade the fair one, not compel.

Grey. Say to what purpose then was seiz'd her castle!
When she your suit rejected, then perforce
To claim her as the gift of royal favour!
To lord it here so long, and now to falter—
My lord, my lord, the mound is overleapt,
What now forbids but without further pause
To crop the rich, the golden fruits within?

Ray. Ungracious is the love reluctance yields;
And cold, cold even as marble is the maid,
Who comes unwilling to another's arms.

Grey. In brief, would you partake the lady's bed?

Ray. What means the question?

Grey. Look on that, my lord:
Better reluctant come, than not at all.

Ray. How came this to your hand?

Grey. By one whose cares
Of thee demand no trivial recompence.
His wakeful eye it was descry'd the bearer;
Else had the watch with all their vigilance
Prov'd insufficient.

Ray. My better angel interposed.

Grey. Had this it's purpos'd scope attain'd—my lord,
Were this but whisper'd in our Henry's ear—
He gave the royal nod, you say: true, he
Permitted, but thus far; that you should woo
The lady, and, her choice approving wed;
No more. By us the public ear is told
She hath approved: our artifice hath spread
The rumour; and with some it is receiv'd
That she is now your full-espoused consort:
But truth, my lord, long cannot rest conceal'd;
It will abroad, of that be sure, in spite
Of all our studied wiles.

Ray. What's to be done?

Grey. 'Tis critical; and must be manag'd nicely—
But see, with Eleanor the Countess comes;
And in her hand the young lord William. Here
Her custom is to walk: retire we now;
And thou observe the counsels of a friend.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter LADY SALISBURY, LORD WILLIAM, and ELEANOR.

Lady Sal. Talk'st thou of patience? What! the very roof,
That should protect and shelter me, become
My prison? Aw'd, and threatened, as I am,
By this intruder!—Cruel destiny!
Had I not more than common griefs before?

Ele. In evil hour thy hospitable gates
Were open'd to receive him.

Lady Sal. Unguarded that I was!—But who could then
Foresee the purpose of his coming.

Ele. Who
Can think even yet, that once repuls'd, he e'er
Would thus presume?

Lady Sal. Is there no succour then?
No generous hand to vindicate my wrongs?
Oh Salisbury! Salisbury! why, if yet thou liv'st—
Fond hope! he lives not, else with speed of thought
Would he repair to his afflicted Ela.

Ele. Why, dearest lady, will you yield you up
A prey to purpos'd sorrow? Time is fruitful;
And the next hour perhaps may bring thee comfort.

Lady Sal. Day after day I have watch'd the joyless hours:
Night after night, when some fleet courier sent
Before perchance, or letter fraught with sweet

Assurance of his safety might appear;
Five tedious moons have pass'd since first were told
The dismal tidings; no fleet courier sent
Before, alas! nor letter with such sweet
Assurance yet appears—He's gone! he's lost!
And I shall never, never see him more.

Ele. Ah! suffer not the leaden hand of cold
Despair thus weigh thee down; I yet have hope—

Lady Sal. Away with hope, away. No, no; full loud,
As I remember, and outrageous blew
The storm, that even the solid fabric shook
Of yonder walls; deep-rooted oaks gave way;
Churches and spires were overturn'd; nor even
The peasant's humble roof esscap'd that hour.
The fleet, save only one, one luckless ship,
Have all return'd; my lord nor hath been seen,
Alas! nor ever heard of since the storm.

Ele. Heaven visit her affliction, and bestow
That patience which she needs.

Lady Sal. No, Eleanor; no more shall he
To these deserted walls return. No more
Shall trophies, won by many a gallant deed,
Thro' the long hall in proud procession move;
No more fair Salisbury's battlements and towers
Re-echo to th' approaching trumpet's voice.
Never, oh! never more shall Ela run
With throbbing bosom at the well-known sound,
T'unlock his helmet, conquest-plum'd, to strip
The cuishes from his manly thigh, or snatch

Quick from his breast the plated armour, wont
T' oppose my fond embrace—Sweet times farewell.

Lord Wil. Mother, why do you speak so? you make me sad.

Lady Sal. It is too soon, my child, for thee to know
What sadness is.

Lord Wil. Will not my father come home soon?
Eleanor told me he would: she would not tell a lye.

Lady Sal. No, love.

Lord Wil. Then he will come.

Lady Sal. Sweet innocence! I fear he will not.

Lord Wil. I hope he is not sick.

Lady Sal. —Go, lovely pratler, seek thy toys; go, go.

Lord Wil. I will, good mother; but don't be sad,
or I shall be so too. [*Exit.*

Lady Sal. Sweet state of childhood! unallay'd with cares;
Serene as spring-tide morn, new-welcom'd up
With bleat of lamb, with note of woodlark wild.
With riper years come passions turbulent
And rude, a baleful crew, unnumber'd as
The forest leaves that strew the earth in autumn.
When happiness is round thee, when thou art on
The lap of downy ease, when thou art cherish'd
In the fair bosom of unruffl'd joy,
Comes a fell hand, dashes thee rudely down,
And leaves thee to despair.

Ele. Cease,
Cease, lady, to afflict thee: Raymond may,
I trust he will, e'er long retire, and give

Thee ease again—But hither comes his minion:
Much with his lord he can; and, as he lists,
To purposes of good or ill o'er-rules
His mind: if he accost thee, speak him gently.

Enter GREY.

Grey. As you are fair above all other women,
So may you lend to that I would implore
A gracious ear.

Lady Sal. Without more preface, briefly speak thy suit.

Grey. To love, but ne'er to reap of love the sweet
Returns, is sure the worst of ills.

Lady Sal. And what of that?

Grey. Tho' love denied, yet pity may do much
To sooth the wound that pity gives—In brief,
Thou much-rever'd! my suit is in behalf of Raymond.

Lady Sal. Then I will spare us both some cost
Of words—In brief, I love him not, nor pity:
So tell thy lord—I would be private—hence.

Grey. Your words are brief indeed; but of that kin
I dare not, must not bear my lord.

Lady Sal. Must not!

Grey. 'Tis cruel towards the man who loves so fondly.

Lady Sal. Doth he assume the specious name of love?
Love is a bright, a generous quality,
Heaven gave to noble minds; pure and unmix'd
With every grosser stuff; a goodly flower,
Shoots up and blossoms in great souls alone

Grey. The mind, th' exalted soul thou nam'st, is his.
Lives there a youth more gentle of condition,
In fair accomplishments more grac'd, admir'd?
If beauty sway thy fond regards, if wealth,
I know not in fair England one with him
Can vie.

Lady Sal. Is then the star, the peerless star,
That late was gaz'd on, quite obscur'd? What th
He may have set, hath he not left a train
Of glory in the skies?—Th' illustrious name
Of Salisbury yet survives—If wealth—but mark me
Were he of all the wealth possess'd from where
Th' East-Indian bids the sun good-morrow, to whe
Th' Atlantic in her wide-extended lap
Receives him setting; could he in each hand
A thousand sceptres place, not all should bribe
Me to his bed—No, Salisbury! thou hast been
The husband of my early love; with thee,
That love was all interr'd; and when I pluck
It forth again, gape wide that earth wherein
Thou liest, quick snatch me from the light of Heave
And swallow me within her lowest prison!

Grey. For pity's sake yet soften; for, oh sure
No former love could ever equal his;
No bosom boast the generous flame wherewith
Lord Raymond glows for thee, admired fair!

Lady Sal. Hear this, ye Heavens, and grant m
patience—Where's
My people? where the freedom that I late
Was blest with? Wherefore is my palace throng'

With strangers? Why, why are my gates shut up
And fortified against their rightful mistress?

Grey. Madam———

Lady Sal. Is this the love he boasts?
Is this the fair accomplish'd, this the gentle youth?
Must I recall to mind—Came he not then
Even while the memory of my dear lov'd lord
Was green: while sorrow yet was in my eyes?
—Tears! ye will choke me—Came he not even then,
And broke in on my sorrows? Like a spoiler
He came, heap'd up the measure of my woes,
Added new anguish to th' afflicted heart,
And swell'd the current of the widow's tears.

Grey. Madam, were he that spoiler thou proclaim'st,
He need not now thus humbly sue for that
His power long since, unask'd might have extorted.

Lady Sal. Ha! what art thou that thus presum'st to threaten?
Extorted!—Hence thou rude one, bolder even
Than him who calls thee slave.

Grey. Madam, you speak
As though you knew me not.

Lady Sal. I know thee well—
To what concerns Lord Raymond I have spoke,
My final purpose fix'd:
For thee, I charge thee shun my presence; hence,
And learn the distance that befits thy calling.

Grey. Not ere I speak more fully to the cause—
Nay, lady, look not on me with so stern

An eye, but give me patient hearing—

Lady Sal. No more; I'll hear no more.

Grey. Nor hear me!—When next we meet—I will be heard. [*Exit.*

Lady Sal. What meant he, Eleanor?—I will be heard.

Ele. Alas! I know not: but a soul he hath,
Prompt and alert to acts of desperate thinking.
Hardly thou art beset; O lady, lend
An ear to what thy Eleanor would counsel.
When next he comes (for that he hath obtained
Of Raymond leave to woo thee to his will,
I know) assume a gentler carriage. Seem
As tho' you may hereafter to his suit
Incline. Be ruled: necessity oft lends
A sanction to deceit. Demand a pause:
My lord of Salisbury's fate yet unconfirm'd
Shall add thereto a seeming colour. Chance,
Mean time, that comes or soon or late to all,
To thee may come with unexpected succour.

Lady Sal. ——Sincerity,
Thou, spotless as the snowy-vested hill!
Forgive me, if, by lawless power constrain'd,
I turn this once from thy long-trodden path;
It must be so——
Oh, Salisbury! Salisbury! thou lamented shade;
Descend from those pure mansions, where thou sit'st
Exalted: hover o'er me: and, as thou
Wert wont, support me in this hour of trial.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Within the Castle. *Enter* RAYMOND *and* GREY.

Grey.

AWAY, my lord, away with every care;
The conflict's past, and fortune is our own—
Defeated once, again I sought the fair;
I sought her, and prevail'd.

Ray. By all the joys, the nameless joys, that on
The precious hour of soft compliance wait,
I will requite thee nobly. Say, for much
My wonder's mov'd, how hast thou found
Such grace? How wrought this change, thus sudden,
——thus,
Unhop'd from her late bearing?

Grey. Uncertain is the sex—but that imports not.
It now remains, that proof, such proof be sought
Of Salisbury's fate, as by minute detail
Of circumstances shall with the lady gain
Prompt cadence—Hear what I have devis'd, if you
Approve——

Enter a Knight.

Knt. My lord, two strangers I have brought,
Within the precincts of the castle found.

Ray. Say'st thou two strangers? of what quality?

Knt. With me they were of speech not over-prompt;
But by their outward guise they would seem men
As with some pious purpose charg'd. Severe
The younger seems, but of excelling form;

And wishes to recruit his wearied limbs
Beneath the friendly covert of this roof.

Ray. Conduct them to our presence— [*Exit* Kn.
I were loth,
The weary traveller to dismiss my gates,
Unhospitably rude; yet none I wish,
While we are yet suspended at the nod
Of peevish and uncertain chance, approach
These walls.

Re-enter Knight, *with* Strangers.

Whence, and what are you?

1st Stran. What we are,
These weeds, tho' we were silent, might unfold.
Alwin I am call'd, my fellow traveller
Leroches. Our way was bent for Canterbury,
With purpose of a pious vow: o'ertaken
By weariness from travel, and desire
Of food, we journey'd hither-ward, in hope
The lord of these fair turrets, first descry'd
At close of evening, might befriend our toils.

Ray. Whence have you come?

Alw. From France, not many days.

Ray. Say, what occasion may have called you hither?

Alw. To aid (Heaven prosper long) my country's
weal.

Ray. You are a soldier then?

Alw. I have been such;
And to be such was my most dear inclining;
Smit with the love, even from my greenest youth,

Of honest arms. Some share of fame I too
Achiev'd—But ill the soldier it beseems
To trumpet his own praises.

Ray. Cease not so.
Tho' in the school of war untutor'd, much
It pleaseth me to hear the brave man's labours.

Alw. None but have heard how some time since was sent
To claim of Lewis certain lands usurp'd
A puissant force———

Ray. Were you therein employed?

Alw. Beneath the royal banner I enroll'd,
As was my bent, in quest of fame.

Ray. Indeed!—
Lord Salisbury then perchance of thee was known?

Alw. I knew him well; our Liege's near ally,
And second to duke Richard in command.
Fast by his side was my allotted post
Upon the marshal'd field: by him I fought,
For him had died.

Ray. Of him fame loudly speaks,
That in those wars he was a gallant man.

Alw. He was not wont, while others bravely fought,
To look unactive on.

Ler. A foe like him,
France never knew, of all that warrior host,
Which like an inundation England pour'd
On her affrighted shores—

Ray. But what
Have prov'd his latter fortunes I should wish

To learn—Say, courteous stranger, if thou can'st,
Of this renowned lord: a rumour hath
Long since prevail'd, that he on Gallia's coast
Was wreck'd with all his crew.

Alw. What cause there was
Of such report, alas! these eyes have seen;
How true in part it is, too sure this tongue
Can testify.

Ray. I pray you let us hear.

Alw. —O'ercharg'd with human prey, fell war has
ceas'd
To walk his wasteful round; well pleas'd we turn
Us from the blood-stain'd field; exulting each
With some rich spoil, trophies by valiant dint
Of arms achiev'd. Forthwith the eager host
Embark.
And now the chalky clifts on Albion's coast
T' our straining view appear'd; th' exulting crew
With peals redoubled greet the well known shore—
Ill fated men! in vain the anxious dame
Oft mounts the high-rais'd tower, thence earnest looks
Haply if her wish'd-for lord may come; in vain
The pratling boy oft asks her of his sire,
That never, never shall return.

Ray. Proceed,
Good stranger—what was the event?

Alw. Anon
The winds began to shift—up rose a storm
And heav'd the bosom of the troubled deep:
On the swoln billows sits enthron'd grim death,

And shakes his fatal dart.—The fleet, which late
In such fair order sail'd, is now dispers'd.
Before the wind we drove, left to the mercy
Of the wild waves, and all-disposing Heaven—
Oh my lov'd friends! associates of my toils!
Rescu'd in vain from war's wide wasteful arm,
Here end your labours! here sweet life forsakes you!
For me, a slender plank, next to the hand
Of some good angel, bore me to the shore.
Of full five hundred gallant lives, which late
Embark'd, not one that fatal hour surviv'd—

Ray. Save only thee?

Alw. Save only me!

Ray. Speak, now secure, for nearly it concerns
My quiet—speak—was Salisbury of your crew?

Alw. Alas! too sure.

Ray. Enough—Thy courtesy
Of us may well, and shall be well requited.
Of this our friend accept mean time his prompt
Regards: anon we shall be glad to hold
Some farther converse with you.

[*Exit* Alw. Ler. *and* Knt.

Grey. Of this stranger
What thinks my lord?

Ray. As of an angel, sent
To waft me on his wings strait to the summit
Of all my wishes—With what a gallant grace
He bears him!—Much I wish to hear him speak
Again—to hear the battles he has fought,
And all the story of his life and fortunes.

Grey. That we shall learn hereafter: but 'tis meet
That he to Lady Salisbury first unfold
The sum of what he had reported.

Ray. Methinks
I now behold her, like some full-blown flower,
The fairest of the garden, late o'ercharg'd
With showers, her head declining sad, whilst he
Recounts the story of her Salisbury's fate.
Would she were mine without a tear;
Without a sigh.—But she must weep; she must;
Thereon my all depends—Oh wayward sorrow!
That wounds—yet wounding heals the lover.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Changes to an Apartment. LADY SALISBURY *reclining on a Couch. Enter* ELEANOR.

Ele. Grief, that of time's fix'd periods for repose
Takes small account, hath lull'd her wearied senses—
Where'er thou dwell'st, Oh Peace, with azure eyes
Serene; or if in stately-structur'd dome,
Or thatch'd-roof'd cottage low, or in cool grot
By fouutain clean thou sit'st, or if perchance
Along the silver brook's green liveried verge
Reclin'd, approach thou rosy-dimpled fair;
Leave thy sweet haunts awhile; and with that balm
Which soothes the woe-struck heart, await her slumbers,

The hour approaches, when, as is her custom,
She seeks the hallowed shrine, and pious wakes
The voice of pure devotion to high Heaven:
I'll thither, and expect her—but she wakes——
How fares the mistress of my best regards?
Proved her slumbers sweet as were my wishes?

Lady Sal. Sweet, sweet, my Eleanor; so sweet, oh! would
I ne'er had wak'd. I dreamt, as wont on him
To dream, that I beheld his gracious form,
My bosom's lord: a while he stood, and seem'd
On me to smile; then flew to my embraces——
Ah fleeting ecstacy!—'twas but a dream.

Enter a Knight.

Knt. Thy favour, lady; I am charg'd with news,
That much imports thy hearing: summon up
Thy powers; two strangers late have come, of whom
One brings assured tidings of thy lord.

Lady Sal. ——My lord——what——speak——

Knt. He saith he knew my Lord
Of Salisbury well; that he was of his crew;
And with that peer embark'd from France.

Lady Sal. —But—well—from France.——

Knt. Lady, all must have
Their sorrows. Strait uprose a mighty tempest,
Dispers'd the fleet o'er all the seas——
The storm—the fatal wreck—of all
The stranger gives most circumstantial proof.

Ele. Alas the tidings!—Dearest lady, give

Thy sorrows vent; thy bosom's overfraught,
And will find ease by letting loose its woes.

Lady Sal. ——Well, well——
Then he is lost, and all, all is despair.
Tho' languid, yet was hope not quite extinct—
Where, where's the stranger? Seek him, haste, that I
May hear him fully speak of all. Methinks [*Exit Kat.*
'Twill be a desperate sort of soothing; to hang
Upon each sound, catch every circumstance
Of the sad story; and wring my aching heart
Till I am even surfeited with sorrow.

Ele. Behold, the stranger comes——

Enter ALWIN.

Lady Sal. Bear, bear me up, good Heaven!
That I may give full measure to my sorrow.

Alw. —Thy angel hover o'er thee, and support thee.
[*In an under voice.*

Lady Sal. ——The dead ere now
Have burst the prisons of the close pent grave,
And apparitions strange of faith appear'd;
Perhaps thou too art but a shadow; let
Me grasp thee, for, as I have life, I think——
It is, it is my Salisbury! O my lord!

Lord Sal. My bosom's joy!

Lady Sal. ——And dost thou live indeed?
Amazing Providence! He does! he does!
Look! look! behold him, Eleanor! behold
The gracious form! The vision was not vain.
[Ele. *goes aside.*

Lord Sal. —And art thou, art thou then—

Lady Sal. —O my full bosom!

Lord Sal. —The same, by time or circumstance unchang'd?

Lady Sal. Unhoped reverse!—Hence, hence all former woes—
My lord! my life! hence, hence, be swallow'd up
All griefs, and lost in this most blissful hour.

Lord Sal. Thou art, I see, thou art the same, thou must—
Thou hast not yielded to another lord?

Lady Sal. Another lord!—and could you, did you think
'Twas so?

Lord Sal. Thus spoke loud rumour on my way:
Indeed, I scarce could think it.

Lady Sal. Oh! 'twas foul!
Indeed thou should'st not think it——

Lord Sal. Ever dear!
No more; my soul is satisfied, and thinks
Of nothing now but happiness and thee.

Lady Sal. Say then, thou wanderer—Oh! I have much
Of thee to ask, thou much to hear: how is't
I see thee, see thee thus? Where hast thou been?
What secret region hath so long detain'd thee?

Lord Sal. O thou! whose image, ever in my view,
Sustain'd me angel like, against the rough
And rapid current of adversity;
Should I recount the story of my fortunes,

Each circumstance, beginning from that day
We parted, to this hour, thine ear would be,
Fatigued; the stars, ere I had ended, cease
To twinkle; and the morning's sun break in
Upon th' unfinish'd tale; suffice it thee
To know the sum:
For England we embark'd, when, black and foul,
A tempest rising, quick upturnd the seas,
And cast me forth upon a hostile shore.
Why need I tell thee, love, how, in disguise,
On foot, alone, I've toil'd my weary way,
Thro' dreary vale, o'er mountain wild; my bed
Oft of the blasted heath, whilst o'er my limbs
Damp night hath shaken her cold, dewy wings,
And the chill northern gale hath spent his breath
On my defenceless head?
Thro' what variety of strange events
I've come, Heav'n-guided, to behold, once more,
My wife?—But, ah! my son! our only hope!
My boy! what, what of him?

Lady Sal. Dear to these eyes
As is the new-born light of Heav'n! he lives;
Is well—But say, my lord, what would thy coming,
Thus unattended, thus disguis'd?

Lord Sal. How I escap'd from hard captivity,
And Gallia's coast, more leisure shall inform you.
My friend, Sir Ardolph, had but just embrac'd me.
(The first glad transports of our meeting o'er)
When, with an honest tear, the good old man

In brief disclos'd what fame had now reported;
That thou wert soon, or had'st, ere this, espous'd
Earl Hubert's nephew, and sole purpos'd heir.——

Lady Sal. Oh, most unhallow'd, thus t' abuse
My unattainted love!——And could my lord——

Lord Sal. Yet hear me.—Strait I grasp'd my sword;
And, single as I was, had sallied forth,
Had not my friend's sage counsels interpos'd.
By Ardolf sway'd, I veil'd me as thou seest;
And, with a sharer in the dark intent,
Set forward on my way for Salisbury castle:
A simple hind's low cottage, not far hence,
Receiv'd us. Here, fast by the green wood side,
We lodg'd; resolv'd, ourselves unknown, to prove
What doubtful rumour only had proclaim'd.
With this intent, at dusk of evening we
Forsook the cot.———

Lady Sal. There needs no more:—Heaven saw
Me, and was touch'd with pity.——What a change
This hour!—Sequester'd as I was, even like
The votarist; perhaps the destin'd prey
Of rude desire.——

Lord Sal. O for to-morrow's slow returning night!

Lady Sal. Say, what of that, my lord?

Lord Sal. Revenge, revenge——
I'll tell thee:—Soon as dark usurping night,
Shall chace to-morrow's sun adown the skies,
Know, Ardolph, with a chosen troop of friends,
To that same cottage, arm'd, shall come——

Enter ELEANOR.

Ele. My lord, I hear th' approach of hasty steps.

Lord Sal. Farewell, my best:
Nor peace nor sleep shall visit me, till I
Have given thee freedom, and reveng'd our wrongs.

Enter Knight.

Knt. Lord Raymond, sir, forthwith expects your coming.

Lord Sal. I will attend him.——Lady, fain would I
Have told thee less ungracious things; but all
Have their appointed trials. Learn to bear;
Convinc'd, the hand of Heaven, when it inflicts,
Prepares us oft for some superior good. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

Within the Castle. Enter RAYMOND *and* GREY.

Raymond.

I SEE nor cause my joys to check; nor boast
As yet securely.

Grey. Think, that hope, the young,
The merry-minded fair, exalts us oft,
To make our fall the greater.

Ray. Why this cold,
This prudent maxim?

Grey. Mark the wary falcon:
Forward he shoots his piercing eye, and kens
The quarry from afar;—like his be thine.——
Perhaps, my lord, mine are but nicer fears,
Wak'd in a heart o'er anxious of thy welfare:—
Yet hath the younger of those strangers rais'd
In me suspicions of alarming hue,
Lest, underneath this honest guise, there lurk
Some subtle mischief. Lady Salisbury saw him:
Their conference, as 'twas long, so was it held
In secret——would we had been present.

Ray. Granting
Our presence had been seemly——wherefore spoke
You not this counsel ere they met?

Grey. I saw not then the danger.
His honest carriage, and the recent change
Within her mind, had lull'd each nicer fear.

Ray. 'Till now unmov'd, say what hath wak'd suspicion?

Grey. I know not well.—Would she were firmly thine,
Beyond the reach and grasp of wayward fortune.
The knight, whose office was to introduce
Him to the countess, he dismiss'd, ere they
Approach'd th' apartment.

Ray. Indeed!

Grey. This too—Is it not strange, though night, and this
Thy proffer'd roof, invited his sojourn;
He would not wait th' approach of morning?

Ray. Are they gone?

Grey. Amid the unguarded joy
Which held us, they escap'd, unheeded.

Enter Second Knight.

Knt. My lord,
Two strangers, it is said, in palmers weeds
Attired, have lodg'd since morning in a hut;
You may have mark'd it, in the darksome glen,
Near to the forest of wild oaks, just where
The stream white rushes down the shelving cliff.

Ray. Since morning, say'st thou?

Knt. Further I have learn'd;—
Their guise, as doth appear from certain words
O'erheard, is borrow'd with design to mask
Some secret purpose. [*Exit.*

Grey. It must be so:—
Their close-concerted arts have foil'd our caution.

Ray. They scarce have measur'd half the precinct yet;—
Send forth my knights, we will pursue them.

Grey. No:—One way there is, and only one——But hence;
I hear the countess——She loves Lord William well:
And much, much will a pious mother, sure,
To save an only son. [*Exeunt.*

Enter LADY SALISBURY *and* ELEANOR.

Lady Sal. In spite of this event, this blest event,
That hath restor'd the lord of this fond bosom,

Yet is my mind with doubts and fears disturb'd;
With images and wild conceits, of form
Unsightly; such as hover oft in dreams
About the curtains of the sick.——Alas!
Whilst others joy within the friendly roof,
Of night regardless, and the storm that beats
Without, he struggles hard; or he at best
To the dark shelter of the dripping wood.
Besides, what unknown perils may assail him,
Unaided thus, against whatever ill.——
Would he had waited the return of morn!

Ele. The night is dark indeed, the tempest high;
But hear me, lady, hear a pious lesson,
Which thy own lips to me have oft repeated:
There is a power unseen, whose charge it is,
With ever wakeful eye, to watch the good;
And peaceful ever is that breast, which trusts
In his angelic guard.—The hand
Of Heaven, that hitherto hath been his shield,
Will minister safe convoy to his steps,
Tho' night and darkness shed their thickest gloom.

Lady Sal. Misdeem not of my fears; or think I speak,
As over diffident of that same power
Thou nam'st, whose all surveying eye wakes ever;
Clear, unobstructed, either when the sun
Shrowds in night's shadowy veil, or when at noon
He shines reveal'd on his meridian throne.—
But where's the bosom throbs not, if it hopes?
Hope ever is attended with a train

Of wakeful doubts; and where the sweet nymph hope
bours,
There flutters also her pale sister, fear.——
But hence, as was our purpose, to the shrine;
Where, as is meet, for my dear lord restor'd,
I will, with grateful adoration———

Enter LORD WILLIAM.

Lord Will. Mother, I fain would know that stranger, who he is, that just now met me.

Lady Sal. And wherefore would'st thou know him, love?

Lord Wil. Gentle he was, and mild; not like those grim-fac'd ones I see here every day: and such kind things he did, as make me love him dearly.

Lady Sal. Say, what were they?

Lord Wil. He kiss'd me, strok'd my head, and patted me upon the cheek, and said———

Lady Sal. What said he, sweet?

Lord Wil. He said, 'Heaven bless thy beauteous head, sweet boy.'

Enter GREY.

Grey. Permit me, honour'd dame, I have a word
Or two, that claims thine ear.

Lady Sal. Then but a word;
My present cares ill brook long interruption.

Grey. Behold the blossom of the spring, how fair!
Yet in his velvet bosom lurks the worm,
And hourly wastes him of his choicest sweets;

Not less a foe is s
To beauty.——
You may remem
The gracious pur
Concern'd Lord
To hope a prospe
In the recesses o
Where with him
He waits thy con
Exchang'd, even
May every rose
And smile propi

Lord Sal. Is t

Grey. For gra
Heaven shows t
T' incline, whe
But say, that fo
His earnest suit
Him happy? or
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Lady Sal. I k
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Grey. You w
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Lady Sal. T
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Grey. A pow

Not less a foe is slow consuming grief
To beauty.——
You may remember, when we last conferr'd,
The gracious purport of your words to what
Concern'd Lord Raymond, when you taught his suit
To hope a prosperous issue; thus by me he speaks:
In the recesses of the hallow'd shrine,
Where with him stands the sable vested priest,
He waits thy coming; there with pious vows
Exchang'd, even now to consecrate thee his.—
May every rose-lip'd son of light look down,
And smile propitious on the joyful hour!

Lord Sal. Is this a season meet for such a theme?

Grey. For gracious acts all seasons should be meet;
Heaven shows the bright example; ever prompt
T' incline, when virtue lifts her suppliant eye.
But say, that for the present he forbore
His earnest suit, say, shall to-morrow make
Him happy? or to-morrow's night, perchance?
Or—what shall be the bright succeeding day?

Lady Sal. I know not;—nor will I submit me or
To promis'd league or tye; no, tho' thou should'st plead
Even with an angel's tongue.

Grey. You will not, lady!——
Know, then, this night, this hour must make thee his.

Lady Sal. This night! this hour!—Who'll make me his this hour?

Grey. A power, my lady, thou shalt learn to fear;

Force, force superior, that, with giant hand,
Plucks even the monarch from his throne—disrobes
The virgin of her honour; while distress
With streaming eyes and loose dishevell'd hair,
Hold forth her supplicating hands in vain.

Lady Sal. I know the monster thou would'st fright
me with;
But I despise his power.——Hast thou ne'er heard
Learn then of me a truth, a golden truth,
Grav'd on the registers of hoary time:
Virtue, with her own native strength upheld,
Can brave the shock of ruffian force, unmov'd
As is the rock, whose firm set base not all
The tumult of the western surge can shake,
Though the fierce winds uplift him to the stars.

Grey. This is a truth indeed may hold a place
On fancy's tinsel page:—What will avail
Thy virtue's boasted powers, when thou shalt see
Torn from thy feeble arms all thou holdest dear?—
Yes, lady, thy Lord William, thy lov'd son!

Lady Sal. Ha!—Save him, Heaven! He dare not
sure——and yet——

Grey. Think, lady, think upon thy son.

Lady Sal. Protect
Him, O ye powers celestial!——angels watch
His steps, and hover round his harmless head!

Grey. Say, will you to the altar, lady?

Lady Sal. Sooner to my grave.

Grey. Thy obstinacy on his head.——Who waits?

Enter a Ruffian.

Lady Sal. What would'st thou here? Hence, execrable wretch!
Thou mak'st my blood run cold.

Lord Wil. Oh, mother, I am frighten'd.

Lady Sal. Dearest lamb!——
Hast thou no terrors for thyself?—Oh, Salisbury!—
Hast thou no fears?——Oh, I could tell thee what,
Like thunder, would appal thy hearing,—shrink
Up every nerve within thy blasted frame,
And make thee nothing.——Fear not, love.

Grey. Think not
With empty sounds to shake our purpose, say,
Will you comply?

Lady Sal. My little innocent!
Thou dar'st not, fell as is thy nature.——My love!
My life!

Grey. Convey Lord William hence.

Lord Wil. Oh, save me, mother, save me!

Lady Sal. Forbear your impious hands, forbear.

Grey. Or to the altar, or by all therein
I swear, this moment wrests him from thy view.

Lady Sal. Inhuman that thou art, can nothing move
Thee?—Oh! those little harmless looks would preach
Even to the hungry lion, make him pause,
And turn his rage to pity.

Grey. Nay, madam——

Lady Sal. Forbear, and I will go.——Whither!
Distraction! I will rouse
The castle.—Help!—My cries shall tear the roof.
Help, help, Oh, help!—the mother and the son!
Grey. Your cries are vain.——

Enter LORD SALISBURY.

Lord Sal. Hold!—What is't ye do?
Grey. He here again!
Lord Sal. Speak, lady, would these men have wrong'd thee?
Pale fear is on thy cheek.

[Ele. *removes Lord* Will. *Exit* Grey *and* Rut.

Lady Sal. Cold horror hath o'ercome me.
Lord Sal. Ever lov'd!
Sure thou wert sore distress'd, I heard thee cry.
Lady Sal. Ah, sore distress'd indeed! the hand of peril
Was on me; violence and murder star'd
Me full in all their hideous forms!
Lord Sal. Gracious powers! my fear, my fear, new wak'd;
For thee it was, as Heaven decreed, that urg'd
Me back, and brought me to thy timely rescue.
Lady Sal. 'Twas Heaven indeed that brought thee hither now!
Yet I have wondrous fears:—thou art but one,
Surrounded by a legion of those fiends.

Enter RAYMOND, GREY, *and armed* Knights.

Ray. [*As he enters.*] Where is the audacious man
that hath presum'd
To question with such bold intrusion?

Lord Sal. If him you mean,
Who took the part of feeble innocence
Against the ruffian's arm,—he's here.

Ray. Which of you, slaves, have suffer'd him to
enter?

Kni. My lord, he bad us to unbar the gates,
Driven by the tempest, as he said, to seek
The proffer'd shelter he had late declin'd:
Pardon, if, deeming him your honoured guest,
We answer'd him with prompt compliance.

Ray. Say what dark purpose is't hath brought thee
hither?
Confess thee true, or by the blessed Saints
Thou shalt have cause to mourn the hour which mov'd
Thee, daring as thou art, t' approach our castle.

Lord Sal. To other regions, other climes with threats
Like these, where proud oppression lords it: here
The free-born subject knows not what it is
To be in awe of arbitrary power.

Ray. I will know what thou art.

Lord Sal. Even what thou seest
Am I; a man not prompt to offer wrong,
Yet of that frame, I brook not to behold
A noble lady made the prey of ruffians.

Ray. Intruder, bold as thou art officious, wherefore
Should'st thou concern thee in this lady's cause?

Lord Sal. The cause of innocence should be the cause
Of all—Confess thee, lord, was't nobly done,
To let those bold, those rude assailants loose,
And give a sanction to such foul proceedings?

Ray. Pilgrim, hast thou forgot thee? Who am I?

Lord Sal. Who art thou! Ask, ask thy deeds,
And they will answer. The breath of Fame hath told
How base they have been; they are gone abroad,
And the pure air is tainted with their foulness.

Ray. Presuming slave! whoe'er thou art, for thy
Unlicenc'd bearing dearly shalt thou answer.
Hence with the bold defamer; bind him fast;
Be instant death his lot should he resist—
Seize him, I say.

Lady Sal. Oh! spare him, spare—

Lord Sal. Out, servile ministers!
Ye know not who it is ye would attempt—
Oppressive lord! whom nor the sacred bond
Of justice, nor of hospitality
Controls, regard me: while with sight
More dire than e'er of Gorgon feign'd, I strike thee—
Now, Raymond, if thou hast of noble fire
One spark within thee, draw thy sword; come on,
And meet my arm; wake all that's man within thee.
Come on—— [*Flings of his disguise.*
'Tis Sal'sbury, Sal'sbury, calls thee to the strife.

Lady Sal. Heaven shield my dearest lord!

Ray. ——Salisbury! then what am I?—

Lord Sal. Vengeance at length is arm'd; thy fate cries out,
And honour—injured honour, claims aloud
Her victim.

Ray. —Secure thou seem'st of fate, but fall who will
A victim, let the sword— [*Drawing.*

Grey. What would you do?—

[*Aside, holding his arm.*

Look not to know him, all may yet be well—
Be not abus'd, my lord: this is a plot,
Devis'd with purpose to effect thy ruin.

Lord Sal. Ha! what do'st say?

Grey. Believe him not, my lord. He!—he Lord Salisbury!
'Tis all a trick, an artful cheat, and he
A liar trac'd—

Lord Sal. Nay then my sword—
—Dishonest knights!

[*Going to attack* Ray. *he is disarmed.*

Lady Sal. Now by these tears do him no violence;
He is, he is my husband.

Grey. Regard her not:
He hath conspir'd against thee, and demands
The hand of justice.

Lord Sal. Will ye not ope, ye Heavens, and instant send
Your thunder to my aid?—Unhand me, villains,
Or, by the powers of vengeance, I will dash
You piece-meal.

Ray. Bear the traitor hence, and bind

His stubborn arms: bestow the lady safe
Within her chamber.

Lady Sal. I will not part my husband—Hold your hands—
They overpower me—Barbarous, barbarous men!

Lord Sal. Ruffians forbear your more than impious hands.

Lady Sal. Yet hear me, Raymond—by these streaming eyes,
Oh! hear me yet—

Ray. Away—

Lord Sal. Slaves! murderers!

[*They are forced off severally.*

Ray. Away with him, away—honour is lost,
And shame must henceforth be my only portion.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter RAYMOND *and* GREY.

Grey.

My lord, you waste the precious hours in cold
Irresolute delays: nor circumstance
Nor time admit of long deliberation.

Ray. —Would I had never seen this fatal mansion!

Grey. A sorry wish, my lord.—Behold the fierce,
The lordly ranger of the desart wild;
No sluggish fear he knows; he pauses not,
Nor looks behind, but onward speeds him till

He gripes the trembling prey: be ever thus
The youth, whom thirst of love and beauty fires.

Ray. —Away; call forth my train—nay murmur not:
Command that, ere the lark proclaim the morn,
They hold them each prepar'd. Here I will rest,
If rest I can, this night; to-morrow's sun
Shall see me fled for ever from these walls.

Grey. ——Go——I detain thee not.
Summon thy train, mount the swift steed, away;
The gates shall open to thy flight.—But know,
That shame and scorn shall follow at thy heels.
Yet worse; the insulted baron next pursues thee:
Nor rocks, nor mountains, nor opposing seas
Shall stay him; but with more than mortal rage
He shall assail thee;

Ray. —Are there no other means?

Grey. None.

Ray. No other way but murder? Horrid thought!—
Oh! Grey, if ere the dagger's drawn I feel
Such perturbation here!—what then, oh what
Shall prove my portion when 'tis steep'd in blood?
The drops can from the point be wip'd away,
But never from the mind.

Grey. Lift, lift thine eye,
And let it gaze upon the bright reward.
Riches and honours grace the swelling act,
While beauty, like the ruby-crowned morn,
When first she 'pears upon the mountain top,
Comes smiling on to meet you. These are objects,

My lord, would irritate the palsied arm
Itself of fear; excite the lagging blood,
And spur it on to acts of noble daring.

Ray. What would you do?—Think—Salisbury is a name
Of all beloved, of more than vulgar sway
Throughout the land; a deed unauthoris'd
As this shall never 'scape the arm of justice.

Grey. Such wary counsels shall our steps o'er-rule
As may deride suspicion—One there is,
A knight among thy vassal train, perhaps
Unnoted: soft of speech he is, and fair;
But of a heart that mocks at human feelings:
Him I have sounded with reserve; and find
Him not unapt to this our secret purpose.—
But say, what recompence, what high reward
Awaits the man, whose arm for thee enacts
Such signal service?

Ray. Half my fortunes—all
Would I on him bestow, whose prosperous arts
Should make the fair one mine.

Grey She shall be thine.

Ray. But say, my friend, what tale—what rare device
Should fruitful art explore that might amuse
Her just suspicions?

Grey. Innocence—the mask
Of innocence, and counterfeited sorrow——

Enter ELEANOR.

Ele. If beauty in distress, if dignity
Now sinking into ruin can assail

Thy pity, come, oh! come, and weep to see——

Grey. The countess, I suppose.

Ele. My lord, my lord,
'Twould melt the savage into human softness,
And make him howl forth pity to behold her——
Oh! did you see her, pale, disorder'd as
She runs, now calling wildly on her lord,
Again upon her son, again on thee.
Sometimes, alas! she beats her beauteous bosom;
Anon in frantic mood tears from her head
The silken hairs, which fall in heaps unheeded;
Wrings her white hands, and weeps and raves by turns,
Till nature spent and wearied gives her pause.

Ray. Away—we will speak comfort to her sorrows.

[*Exit* Eleanor.

—Wretch that I am!—But I will yield them up;
Son, husband—all I will resign, if so
I may appease her phrenzy.

[*Going, is detain'd by* Grey.

Grey. Be not rash.
Short is the date of every stronger passion;
Unstay'd the mind of woman; by a breath
Oft agitated, by a breath compos'd—
Yield them, my lord! it would be madness, ruin.

Ray. Which ever way I turn, it is destruction.

Grey. O'ercast with fear, thine eye takes nothing in
But fancies of the sickliest hue—For shame,
Rouse, rouse, my noble lord; awake, shake off

This weakness. Pleasure must be woo'd with toil.
Go to her, solace her; if that should fail,
Permit her as by stealth to visit Salisbury;
At sight of him this tumult shall subside.

Ray. With love and pity I am torn. In vain
I strive; too far I am advanc'd in error.
Oh! will no hand disclose a path, whereby
I may return?—Accurs'd be thou, myself;
And doubly be accurs'd that fatal hour
I turn'd mine ear to thy destructive counsels.

[*Goes out in great agitation.*

Grey. [*Alone.*]——My hopes begin to totter.
If he resign them, Salisbury is appeased,
And he retires: what then becomes of Grey?
On me, on me of course the tempest falls.
That must not be—He goes to see her now—
Who knows what new-sprung hope may follow thence?
There is a charm in soft distress, that works
Upon the soul like magic; causing love
Oft times, as oft exciting loose desire—
It is most apt. I will, before he goes
To her, explore each access to his heart;
Attack each avenue that leads to virtue;
Try every winning art that may assist
The loose contagion: should he seize her beauties,
Farewell remorse; then dies the injured husband.

[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Opens and discovers LORD SALISBURY *on the Ground, in Chains. Enter* LEROCHES.

Ler. Alas! on the cold ground! I fear his wrongs
Have made him mad; I heard him rage—My lord—
Rise, rise, my lord, and speak to thy Leroches.

Lord Sal. —Thou art unkind.

Ler. Oh! would to Heaven that I could ease thy troubles!

Lord Sal. I had in sweet oblivion lost myself
And every care; why hast thou call'd me back
To hated recollection?—O! my wrongs,
My wrongs! they now come rushing o'er my head—
Again, again, they wake me into madness.

Ler. Thy wrongs shall be reveng'd.

Lord Sal. Torn from them both!
——Let me not think.

Ler. Think on our friends, my lord:
Perhaps even now they are at hand; and soon
Will thunder at the gates.

Lord Sal. Is't possible?
Or do my eyes but false persuade me to it?—
In trammels! and within my walls! beneath
That roof where I am sole-invested lord!—

Ler. Look, behold.

Lord Sal. I see; thou are dishonour'd.

Ler. 'Tis the will
Of Heaven, and I submit me to my fortunes.

Lord Sal. How cam'st thou hither?
Ler. By command, as I
Suppose, of—but I will not name him.
Lord Sal. Blasts
Upon him!—Didst thou see my wife?
Ler. No, my lord.
Lord Sal. Nor my son?
Ler. My lord I saw not either.
Lord Sal. Nor of either heard?
Ler. No, my good lord;—I trust that they are safe.
Lord Sal. Hear me, sweet Heaven! ye throned
powers above,
Dread arbiters of mortal doings, hear—
Dry not instant up the springs of life,
But grant me measure of revenge. Unbind,
For pity these dishonour'd limbs unbind,
And give this monster to my willing arm:
If I not firmly gripe, if I not tear
With more than savage force his hated form—

Enter a Knight.

Traitor!
What has thou done? Bring forth my honour'd dame-
Haste, bring her instant; give her to my arms,
Uninjur'd, undefil'd, or, by the souls
Of the most holy and unspotted saints——
Spare me, good Heaven—I am, I am to blame.
Imports thy coming aught with me?
Knight. Behold
In me thy better angel, come to warn

Thee of unguarded danger—Oh! my lord,
My lord! beware of horrid treachery—
Whatever knight thou not'st, that, traitor like,
Approacheth thee with smiles; that, with the charm
Of honey'd speech, would practice on thy hearing,
Of him beware—They seek thy ruin; chance
Betray'd their purpose; I was touch'd with pity.
[*Going.*

Lord Sal. Nay, go not yet.

Knt. Suspicion's on the watch;
My thoughts are scarce my own.

Lord Sal. It is for guilt,
Not conscious honesty, to taste of fear.

Knt. Know then, my lord, tho' strict necessity
Enrolls me in the list of Raymond's train,
Yet doth my soul abhor the unhallow'd service.

Lord Sal. Be thou but faithful and discover all
Thou know'st, so shalt thou thrive in Salisbury's favour.

Knt. Fear not my faith. But shall Lord Salisbury prove
A friend indeed? For I shall need thy arm
And interest both against so great a foe.

Lord Sal. Now by my honour, ever yet held dear,
I will protect thee, 'gainst whatever foe.

Knt. Morton desires but this—Know then, that late
As by the western porch I stood, my ear
Was met by certain voices: strait I turn'd;
And thro' the crevice of th' adjoining door
Was known that same insidious knight and Grey,

In low, but earnest converse. Thee they nam'd;
And I could hear the latter, whilst he said,
'A dagger is the best. With honest smiles,
'And fair-instructed speech you must essay him.
'Thy peace and fortunes on this feat depend.'

Lord Sal. I thank thee for this warning; and ere lo
Shall recompense thy love.

Mor. Had I the power
To serve thee, as the will, thou should'st not wear
Those marks of shame——But oh! the unhapp
Countess!

Lord Sal. What, what of her?

Mor. Alas! to think the pangs
She feels this moment, torn as she hath been
By rude barbarians from her lord and son.

Lord Sal. But is she safe? Hath not dishonou
reach'd her?

Mor. Oh may she never know dishonour!—Yet
Lord Raymond——

Lord Sal. Perish the detested name
For ever! for it makes my blood outcourse
The wholesome speed of nature.

Mor. It is true,
He holds her in his power—

Lord Sal. He does, he does:
And I do live to know it!

Mor. But I trust
He will not use that power—Farewell, my lord;
I will away, and gather all I can
Of their condition.

Lord Sal. Thou shalt win my love.
See, see my wife, oh! see her if thou can'st:
Speak comfort to her. Say the only pangs I feel
Are for her safety. Bid her hope for timely aid;
But to remember still, the virtuous mind
Will welcome death itself before dishonour.

Mor. To see her, is a task I fear will foil
My utmost; but no art shall be untried. [*Exit* Mor.

Lord Sal. Is there no way to freedom?—Oh my friends!
My friends! Haste, Ardolf, haste to my revenge.

Ler. Thy fierce impatience, thy untoward will
It is, my lord, that hath betray'd our safeties.
To Ardolf deaf, thou would'st not wait his succours;
Deaf too to me, thou would'st approach the castle.

Lord Sal. Fear not: this stranger, like Heav'n's brighter star,
Hath risen propitious—Heav'ns! but what of that?
My wife!—perhaps even now within the gripe
Of fell incontinence she struggles—Beware
That thought—down, down, or I shall rage to madness.

Ler. My lord, he would not——

Lord Sal. Hark!—

Ler. He would not, dare not, sure: or if he dare,
Her inborn dignity, her virtue—

Lord Sal. Peace!—

Lady Sal. Hold off your brutal hands!
[*From without.*

Lord Sal. 'Tis she! 'tis she!
The slave assails her—Let me forth——
Slaves! murderers! instant let me forth, or I——
Lady Sal. Hast thou no touch of pity?
Lord Sal. Horror! horror!
Out hair! out by the roots! nor let a grain
Be left to tell there grew such honours there.
Lady Sal. O, my lord! my lord!——
Lord Sal. By Heav'n I will not be restrained——
[Ler. *strives to stay him.*
Nor all your bolts, nor barriers, all the powers
Of hell united shall withhold me from her——
Ler. Preserve him, Heaven! I fear
Some act of horrid import——Oh! she comes!
Wild, wild as the rough ocean vex'd with storms.
[*Bursts forth.*

Enter LADY SALISBURY, ELEANOR, *and* MORTON.

Lady Sal. I will have vengeance. Such an outrage—No,
I will not weep. They think I have no means:
'Tis false: I will resume a spirit.
Ele. Alas! alas!
Lady Sal. I had a son: sweet William!—thou hast heard
Him prattle: there was music on his tongue.
Ele. Can Heav'n behold such crimes, and not awake
It's thunders?
Lady Sal. Weep'st thou? I can weep myself;

I have some cause——He is my husband—who
Will part us?—Cold, cold, cold. The rains beat sore,
And the winds make a noise; 'tis a rough night;
No little star to guide his darkling steps——
The Heavens do rain down pity for me.

Ele. Rave
Not thus, dear lady; oh! be comforted.

Lady Sal. Yes, yes; I know: these trifles have disturb'd me.
The bird is rifled.
Poor flutterer! oh! it was nought to spoil
Her of her little hope——Did'st thou not see
Her valiant mate, how fierce he shook his plumes,
And peck'd at them? Did he not?——He had sav'd
His mistress from the spoilers, but they snar'd him.

Lord Sal. [*Entering.*] Where is the slave? I will not brook delay.

Lady Sal. He's come! he's come——Now ruffians, I have found
Him, we will die together ere you part us.

Lord Sal. Hell! what are your blackest horrors to this?

Lady Sal. We will have justice—Bury Grey alive.

Lord Sal. She's lost!

Lady Sal. Say you!—Put Raymond to the torture.

Lord Sal. I will tear him joint by joint.

Lady Sal. But they will part us——
They come—You shall not—no; no power on earth
Shall force me—Now they pull—Hold, hold, my lord—
Yet closer——now, now, now.

Lord Sal. My wife, my Ela!
Lost as thou art, oh! do not leave me.

Mor. Distressful sight! Oh, most inhuman Grey!

Ele. Nature, my lord, unequal to the conflict,
Has for a space retir'd within herself;
But shortly to return. This interval
Of death-like quiet will, I trust, recall
Her safer senses——She revives.

Lady Sal. But this is strange——

Ele. My lord,
Speak to her; sooth her, and she will be calm.

Lord Sal. Speak to her, sooth her——what have I
with her? with thee?
Oh agonizing hour! Had I but perish'd
In the safe wave that buried my lov'd friends,
It had been well—'Twas cruelty to save me.

Lady Sal. Am I indeed awake?—Let me stand up—
What is the matter?

Lord Sal. My poor, injur'd wife!

Lady Sal. Nay, but inform me, I am overdoubtful;
I would believe, I know—if what I now
Behold, be not a dream, you are my husband?

Lord Sal. The wretch that was so call'd.

Lady Sal. Alack! alack!
Sure I have been afflicted sore—My lord!
My life!—why dost thou start from me? Oh take
Me to thy arms, for I have need of comfort!

Lord Sal. Art thou not undone?

Lady Sal. Indeed I have wept.

Lord Sal. Lost, stain'd, dishonour'd by a villain?

Lady Sal. How
My lord! Think'st thou that I have other wrongs
To weep than thou hast seen?

Lord Sal. I heard thee cry.

Lady Sal. I know not what I did—Dishonoured!—O!
The thought wakes every pulse to indignation.

Lord Sal. What! did he not assail thee?

Lady Sal. No—Assail me!

Lord Sal. Then thou art safe, thy honour unassay'd?

Lady Sal. So witness Heaven!

Lord Sal. The God of Heaven be prais'd!

Lady Sal. —And could'st thou think so meanly of me?—Oh!
I had let the life-blood from this bosom forth
Ere I had brook'd dishonour.

Lord Sal. Best of thy sex—Thy cries like daggers pierc'd me:
And fearful fancy pictur'd such a scene
As hurried me to madness—But thou art safe,
My wife is safe! and I am blest again.

Lady Sal. My heart o'erjoys—Then wherefore do I fear?

Lord Sal. I had forgot—our son; for him thou fear'st?

Lady Sal. Not only for my son, but for thyself,
Thy precious self I trembl'd—Oh, this fiend!
The slaves and agents of destruction, black
And bold, are station'd round him, and but wait
Their master's nod.

Ler. Would we were safe bestow'd
Without this fearful prison!
Lady Sal. Would we were!—
Think, think, my lord, is there no way of flight?
Lord Sal. Thou hast recall'd to my remembrance what,
If seconded by this our plighted friend,
May claim a serious and attentive hearing.
Mor. Small is the service I can boast my lord;
In all my best I shall be prompt to aid you.
Lord Sal. Hear then.—Deep underneath this vaulted ground,
Curious and close, by our forefathers scoop'd,
I do remember me there is a dark
And secret mine, which leads by many a maze
Without the castle.—Not far thence there stands,
Within the bosom of an aged grove,
An house for pious uses set apart,
The hallow'd seat of godly brethren: there
I fear not we shall rest secure of ill.
Lady Sal. Most opportune as could our wishes frame—
But oh! our little hope! our younger care!
Mor. My life shall answer for Lord William's safety.
Lady Sal. Then let us forth.
Mor. The night is over young;
The castle's yet awake, and would but mock
The attempt.
Lord Sal. Say, what shall be the appointed hour.

Mor. Some three hours hence, my lord; or ere the clock
Perchance have told the second watch—And now
That squint suspicion mar not, let us part.

Lady Sal. Then must we part?—But 'tis to save us all.
Three hours—farewell!—Oh! they will be three long,
Long hours to me!

Lord Sal. Farewell my best!—Mean time,
Leroches, we will rest us here apart.—Farewell,
Farewell! thou soother sweet of every care!
The God, that loves the unsullied mind, descend,
And be thy guardian till we meet again! [*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Forest and Cottage. Enter ARDOLF *and a* Knight.

Ardolf.

THE storm is laid; and from the parting clouds
See where the moon steps forth, pale goddess,
Chearing the dark, dull brow of hagard night.—
This is the forest—that the cottager's,
Or I do err, th' appointed place of meeting.

Knt. It is; behold the rock, as was describ'd,
The torrent foaming down his rugged side.

Ard. See, the bright harbinger of morning climbs
The steep of Heaven: they're in the first repose—
Wake, peasant, wake—How balmy sweet the sleep
Of him, who stretches under rustic roof!

His task of labour o'er, content he lays
Him on his rushy couch; nor elves, nor goblins,
(The coinage of swoln surfeit or of guilt)
Approach his peaceful pillow.—Wake, I say:
Peasant, awake.

Enter a Peasant *from the Cottage.*

Pea. Who calls?
What is your business, that at this late hour
You make the forest echo with your cries?
Ard. Peasant, are there not certain travellers
Within thy cottage?
Pea. No.
Ard. What! saw you not
Two stranger pilgrims pass this way?
Pea. I did.
Two such arrived ere the lark had risen
From her moss cabin, or the cock
Gave note of morn.
Ard. Say, gentle cottager,
Where may they now be lodg'd?
Pea. Nay, stranger, that
I know not. They went hence about the time
The bat began her twilight play.
Ard. 'Tis strange
They should depart—Left they no message?
Pea. None.——
They said, they wish'd to see the neighbouring abbey;
But would to-night partake our homely fare.

[*Returns into the Cottage.*

Ard. We now are in the precincts of the castle;
But whether to proceed, or wait, perchance
If they return, I know not.—Hark! some one
Approaches—who is there?

Enter LEROCHES.

Leroches!

Ler. Happily met—where are your friends?

Ard. At hand; and well appointed each—where is my lord?

Ler. In chains: in his own castle basely bound——
Torn from his wife and son.—How I escap'd—
But haste; time is too precious now for more:
His life hangs upon each eventful moment.

Ard. In chains! his life in danger!—Ho! my friends!
To horse, quick; we will rescue him, or perish.

Ler. Ardolf, pursue the eastern causeway you;
I with a chosen few will trace the path,
Which led me from the postern.

Ard. Wisely cautioned:——
Divided thus, we wage an easier war.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Within the Castle. Enter GREY *and* MORTON.

Grey. My noble Morton!——well hast thou repaid
The nicer hope which I repos'd in thee.
—Their unprovided rest outruns my wishes.

Mor. Fools! not to see through my hypocrisy!
That, in the borrow'd guise of honest friendship,
I studied but to lure them to my toils—
Conceal'd from upper light, it yields a safe
Retreat—through that they purpos'd their escape.

Grey. Within the secret womb of that same vault,
When all the castle's hush'd, their bleeding trunks
We will deposit.

Mor. Yes—we will be bloody.

Grey. Here is the weapon—Be firm, and prosper.

[Mor. *receives a dagger and goes out.*

——Thou too, unthinking fool, must this hour bleed—
Would it were over—they may chance to wake.—
Thou, Sleep! still child of sable-hooded night,
Befriend us! From thy dark Lethean cell
Up-conjure all thy store of drowsy charms:
Lock fast their lids, o'erpower each torpid sense,
That they awake not ere the deed be done—

[*Bell tolls.*

—The second watch: and like death's curfew, deep
And dismal verberates the solemn knell!

Enter a Knight.

Knt. A stranger, sir, who calls him Oswald, waits
Without the castle, and would speak with you.

Grey. Oswald!—He is our friend.

Knt. I have not learn'd
His errand; but, as it would seem, he comes
With news that much imports thy present hearing.

Grey. I'll speak with him anon.

Knt. I know not what
Their purpose; but even now, as on the tower
I stood, which high o'erlooks the eastern causeway,
Methought I heard the distant sound of horses,
As hither bent in full career.

Grey. Th' sound
Of horse!—Look out; call up our knights—away.
[*Exit* Knt.
—What can delay him?—Should my present hopes
Miscarry, I will bear the lady hence,
And make her hostage for my safety; nay,
Perchance, what I have some incentives to,
Supplant them both, the lover and the husband—
He comes!—

Re-enter MORTON.

Mor. Oh! that the earth would yawn and cover me!
Or that Heaven's quick-devouring fires had shrunk
And whither'd up this arm when it was rais'd—
Eyes! eyes! why clos'd ye not ere you beheld
The ghastly ruin?

Grey. Speak, direct——are they dispos'd?

Mor. Away!—thou hast destroy'd my peace for ever—
Had you beheld him as he lay, struggling
In the cold gripe of death; his cheeks o'erspread
With livid pale; those eyes, that late shot forth
So radiant, now quite sunk; their burning lamps
Extinct; while from the deep-mouth'd wound,
As from a copious fountain, issued forth

Life's purple springs.—
I would have fled, but horror for a space
Suspended every power.

Grey. 'Tis well—
Hast thou then slain Lord Salisbury?
At thy own peril be it—Help!—He has slain
The innocent!
They're murder'd, foully murder'd by a slave. [*Exit.*

Mor. The earth has teem'd with prodigies—this sure
Out-monsters all!

Enter RAYMOND *hastily, with his Sword drawn.*

Ray. On what purpose art thou here?

Mor. Lord Raymond cannot be a stranger sure.

Ray. A dagger!—what hast thou done?

Mor. Did not my lord approve the deed?

Ray. What deed?

Mor. How this!—My lord,
I had your sanction ratified by Grey;
With promise of high recompence the hour
When Salisbury should expire.

Ray. Accurs'd be he that told thee so; and thou
That gav'st him credit!

Mor. This is strange!

Ray. Approve!
I did not; by the powers of truth I did not—
Remorseless villain!—Where, where shall I hide
Me? whither shall I fly?—O deed of horror!—
Thy blood, detested hireling, shall in part
Compensate.

Mor. Hold—He cannot sure dissemble—
Wish you, my lord, this deed were yet undone?
Ray. What would the monster?—Oh! could I recall
His life by killing twenty thousand slaves
Like thee, it were a comfort!
Mor. I believe
That you are innocent:—know then, my lord—
He lives—he sleeps; and sleeps secure of harm.
Ray. Take heed thou dost not trifle.
Mor. I will confess
Me true, and Heaven forgive my foul intent!
I undertook to slay this innocent:
Approach'd him as a friend—I saw his sufferings;
Saw his distracted wife: at length I curs'd,
And in my heart abjur'd the wicked purpose.
Ray. Had'st thou the goodness! Then, perhaps—
Mor. I thought
Haply that you yourself might soon relent.
—This instrument of purpos'd cruelty,
I took; and with a fair-devised tale
Of Salisbury's death, amus'd the guilty wretch
That would ensnare your quiet.
Ray. Is this honest?
Mor. Approach, my lord, approach, and let your eye
Be witness of my truth—In doing this,
I thought I should be deem'd Lord Raymond's friend.
Ray. Thou wert the best of friends!—Retire thou now— [*Exit Mor.*
One way there yet remains to reconcile
This double war, and heal my tortur'd bosom,—

Thou, that so soundly sleep'st, unguarded thus
[*Going to the side of the stage.*
Against whatever ill that may approach thee,
Awake!——rouse from the bed of listless sleep,
And see who comes to greet thee.

Enter LORD SALISBURY.

Lord Sal. Do I dream?
Or am I in the regions of the unblest,
Beset with monsters?——Though thou art a fiend,
I will attempt thee.

Ray. Rush not on my weapon.——
I have sought thee on a cause which honour loves;
And would not have thee mar my soul's fair purpose.

Lord Sal. Inglorious! base! Oh, shame to manhood!—Dearly
Shalt thou atone the accumulated wrongs
That I do bleed withal.——Nor sea, nor earth,
Though thou should'st traverse her remotest climes,
Shall shelter thee from my determin'd fury.

Ray. Think not that I shall fly thee; or that I
Have sought thee now, but on such terms as even
May challenge thy applause. I come a foe
Indeed, but I do come a generous foe.

Lord Sal. A generous foe!——The brave indeed aspire
To generous acts——their every thought looks up,
And honour's dictates are their only function:
But thou!—what terms would'st thou propose? What act

Of that essential virtue, that may rase
The ignoble stains wherewith thou art polluted?

Ray. The ignoble, and the brave alike have err'd;
And he that re-ascends to virtue's height,
Does often snatch a wreath, which never bloom'd
On safer wisdom's brow.——First let me loose
Those ignominious bonds, which have indeed
My own dishonour'd—not the wearer's arm.

[*Takes off his chains.*

Lord Sal. Say, to what purpose tends this honest seeming?

Ray. That I have wrong'd thee, I confess——take this, [*Gives him a sword, and draws another.*
The only restitution I have left.—
I know thou never can'st forgive, nor I
Forget:—The sword then judge between.

Lord Sal. Indeed!——
Lives there so much of honour then within thee?
Spite of the mighty wrongs which thou hast done
Me, I do thank thee.

Ray. Now fortune mark her favourite!——

[Ray. *is disarmed.*

Then she is partial, and I must submit.

Lord Sal. Take up thy sword again; my fair revenge
Disdains too cheap a conquest.

Ray. 'Tis too much.
Oh generous!—generous even to cruelty!——
Some way I would repay thee—Oh, that I

[*Takes up his sword.*

Had never seen thy wife!——It may not be——

Then let me tear for ever from my breast
The guilty passion :—thus I thank thee—thus
[*Wounds himself.*
Atone the mischiefs, that——Oh!—— [*Falls.*

Lord Sal. This indeed
Atones for all. Thou much misguided youth!
What tempted thee to stray so wide from honour?

Ray. Ask, ask that villain; he will answer all—
That villain Grey, whose wicked arts seduc'd me—
Forgive——I die, I die:—a dreadful proof
What ills await the wretch, who gives his ear
To vicious counsels.

Lord Sal. Dreadful proof indeed!——
I do forgive thee, so forgive thee, Heaven!

Re-enter MORTON.

Now where's my wife? where is my friend Leroches?

Mor. My lord, by my assistance he has fled.
——I saw how vain your purpose to escape;
His single flight was unobserved.——Your friends,
In quest of whom he hasted, are arriv'd:
That trumpet speaks it. [*A trumpet heard.*

Lord Sal. It is, it is, Sir Ardolf!—See, he comes.

Enter ARDOLF *and* Knights.

Ard. My noble friend!——safe!—crown'd with
conquest too!

Lord Sal. Saw you Leroches?

Ard. My lord,
He sought the castle by a private path——
I thought he had been here by this.

Lord Sal. 'Tis well.
But where's my wife? my son?—my soul is maim'd
Of half its joys till I've again embrac'd them.

Enter ELEANOR.

Ele. My lord, my lord!——the countess and Lord William——
Send, send and save them from destruction!
With horses that outstrip the winds, the villains
Have borne her from the castle!

Lord Sal. Ravish'd by villains!——Mount your horses, haste!——

Ard. Say, which way have they fled?

Ele. West of the castle:
Heaven grant their swiftness mock not your best speed!

Ard. Now, good my lord, if I might speak——

Lord Sal. Speak not
To me; but forth and scour the country!

Ard. Hark!
Methought I heard a voice——

Ele. And I methought.——
Perhaps Heaven has been kind!—perhaps 'tis she.

Lady Sal. [*Entering.*] Now, hush'd be ev'ry fear—
Where, where's my hero,
That I may once more hold him to my bosom?

Enter LADY SALISBURY *and* LORD WILLIAM, *conducted by* LEROCHES.

Lord Sal. 'Tis she! 'tis she!
My wife is in my arms again!—Speak, speak——
Oh, whence this precious, this unlook'd event?

Lady Sal. When the fell ruffian,
When Grey with impious hands had snatch'd us hence
Then came my guardian angel—came your friend,
And rescued us from ruin.

Ler. Happy hour!
I took the path which brought me to their rescue!
The atrocious villain fell beneath this arm.

Lord Sal. My wife!
My son! my friend!—My God! my guardian God!

Ele. O joy, that they are here again!

Lord Sal. They're here! they're here!—my wife and
son are here!——
Proclaim it, O ye sons of light!—spread wide
Your starry pinions, angels, spread them wide,
And trumpet loud throughout th' unmeasur'd tract
Of highest Heaven, that virtue is made happy!

Lady Sal. Let the sun cease to shine, the planets
cease,—
Drop every star from his ethereal height,
Ere I forget thee, source of every good!

Lord Sal. Friends, I am much beholden to you all.
My love! the gloom, that overspread our morn,
Is now disper'sd; our late mishaps
Recall'd shall be th' amusing narrative,
And story of our future evening, oft
Rehears'd. Our son too,—he shall hang upon
The sounds, and lift his little hands in praise
To Heaven: taught by his mother's bright example
That, to be truly good, is to be bless'd.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS. DANCER.

THIS virgin author's such a blushing rogue——
What! no gay, lively, laughing epilogue?
'Madam,' says he, and look'd so wise! 'in Greece'—
(Greece—that's their cant) 'no jesting clos'd the piece.
'Play, epilogue, and all were grave and solemn'—
Then, sir, the town were fools that did not maul 'em.
No—let your heroine, in this laughing age,
Come thus (as Bayes says) souse upon the stage;
Then with a jaunty air—half smile, half grin,
Curtsey quite round the boxes, and begin.

A spark from court—no husband to detect him:
A pretty fellow too, and yet reject him!—
Now, ladies, let me die but it was silly——
You'll not approve such horrid prudery—will ye?—
I should have bless'd the occasion, and receiv'd him:
He should have kneel'd and vow'd, and I—believ'd him.
—Laugh'd, danc'd, and sported it till spouse came over,
Then kiss'd my dear—while Betty hid the lover.

But here again our Poet checks my flight:
'Nay, madam, you mistake the matter quite.

'My heroine liv'd in ancient, honest times;
'Cards were unknown, and gallantries were crimes.'—
Psha! what if females then were seldom rovers?
Husbands—(aye, there's the cause) were warm as lovers.
Their warlike days indeed were spent in killing;
But then, at night—no turtles were so billing.

Well—though he gives me no smart things to say;
I wish this begging face may save his play:
The thing may mend, and learn to please you better—
Do then—nay, pray you show him some good nature.

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